

...BCISD Awards

(Continued from previous page)

Perfect Attendance

Pre-K

Edrina Carroll

Kindergarten

William Althaus, Lakynn Bryan, Hattie Jo Burton, Bladen Chavez, Charlie Gardenhire, Easton Johnson, Michael Smith, Zaylie Torres

1st Grade

Elizabeth Althaus, Ellora Carroll, Mateo Flores, Caroline Franklin, Cooper Johnson, Tessa Monday, Jerry Scott, Rebecca Shotwell, Jordan Smith

2nd Grade

Tilden Bryan, Isaac Garza, Brooks May, Jack Pierik, Andy Vigil

3rd Grade

Brody Dove, Anthony Garza, Taygen McVey, Layla Meek, Moriah Smith

4th Grade

Drake Glenn, Lawson Hambright, Kaelison O'Shields

5th Grade

Tatum Pate, Isabella Pico, Dameon Rivera

6th Grade

Brayden Claborn, Addison Dove, Paige McVey, Emmie Scott, Brylee Torres, Brynlea Wojtek

7th Grade

Kreed Cummings, David Evangelista, Reece Kidd, Morgan Rasco, Jaxon Shipman

8th Grade

Cooper Claborn, Kinley Cummings, Morgan Dove, Elijah Drake, Makinlee Killough-White, Kadence Martinez, Marlene Sanchez

9th Grade

Karter Cummings

10th Grade

Dustin Boyd, Luz Cano, Blane Crosson, Dawson Dominey, Christopher Gieck, Ethan Morris, Matthew Shipman, Dylan Taylor, A'Chyanna Torres

11th Grade

Jaelyn Baker, Gloria Gonzales, Kiley Gregg, Chloe McKinney, Sam Meier, Cadi Powers, Tyson Walls, Blade Wood

12th Grade

Kiley Cummings, Cami Davidson, Myrka Ibarra, Darrian Kenney, Zachary Panzer, Nathaniel Shipman



Peace and Tranquility

by James M. Decker

October 10 each year is designated as World Mental Health Day. Last year in this space, I wrote about the importance of this day and opening the conversation about mental health and mental illness. For many years, these terms have carried an unfair, unwarranted stigma in our society, which makes life even harder for people who are struggling. This stigma makes our friends, family members, and neighbors afraid to seek help. As I wrote last year, almost half of Americans will struggle with their mental health at some point in their life. As I wrote a few weeks back, the effects of COVID-19 restrictions and quarantines have put an even greater strain on our collective mental health.

Several years ago, I heard a radio advertisement for mental health services that really struck a chord with me. The advertisement pointed out that, when we are faced with physical health challenges, we expect to do something to fix it, so why do we not do the same with mental health? When we are physically ill, we seek out a doctor or other remedies. Before we come ill, we engage in preventative measures - we get checkups, we exercise, and if we have certain risks, we watch what we eat to manage those risks.

This year, for World Mental Health Day, I got to thinking about *how* we can improve our own individual mental health in preventative ways. If you are at risk for, say, high

blood pressure, it is wise to manage it before it becomes a real problem. Mental health is the same way. We all have our own risks, from mild to severe. Stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges can be lurking for each of us, so it is important to engage in preventative measures.

For me, I think it is important to find ways to just turn everything off. My day is a constant clutter of noise and screens. I constantly talk to people in person, on the phone, by text message, or by email. I draft documents on computers and I usually have two computers going at once. I am also the kind of person who works better when I have background noise, whether music or a podcast of some sort. I find pleasure in listening to audiobooks in the mornings and evenings. So in my life, there's usually "noise" happening at all times. That is not inherently a bad thing, but I also realize that it is difficult for me to just turn off the noise and sit peacefully and fully relax. I have tried to do it on the patio or in my recliner, but it usually leads to me dozing off.

I have been thinking about healthy outlets to find relaxation, in ways that I will (hopefully) enjoy. Just down from my house is College Lake, a city-owned undeveloped park area that serves as Stamford's backup water supply. It has great

potential for recreational development (something to discuss later) but is already a handy place to spend some time in a small boat. Lately, I have been pondering how much I would enjoy floating around College Lake in a kayak. It is a small enough body of water that I could practice my skills without requiring a Coast Guard rescue, and it is an incredibly peaceful and tranquil location, particularly in the early mornings and late evenings. I am sharing this with you, readers, knowing that it will hold me accountable. If you do not follow me on Facebook (james.decker) or on Instagram (@jamesmdecker), I encourage you to do so. I'm going to use this outlet to unplug from noise, but I will definitely take a few pictures of my adventures as I do.

As always, if you are struggling with your mental health, please reach out to someone for help. But if you are like me, I encourage you to seek out preventative mental wellness. Let us find some peace and tranquility amidst the noise of life. If you have already found your peace and tranquility, where do you find it?

James Decker is a lawyer, farmer, and mayor in Stamford, and the creator of the forthcoming "West of 98" podcast and website. He may be contacted through Facebook at facebook.com/james.decker.

Texas Farm Bureau launches daily 'Texas Ag Today' podcast

A new podcast produced by the Texas Farm Bureau Radio Network highlights important news and happenings in Texas agriculture and rural Texas every weekday.

The state's largest general farm and ranch organization launched the podcast, Texas Ag Today, on August 31.

"This podcast is great for Texas farmers, and ranchers and anyone who has an interest in Texas agriculture," John Ross Copeland, Coke County Farm Bureau president, said.

Because wildlife is part of many Texas farms and ranches and important to many Texans for recreation, the podcast also includes a wildlife report.

A portion of the podcast recaps the day's livestock, cotton, grain and energy markets.

The latest information on policies related to agriculture from Washington, D.C., and Austin are included, as well.

"Texas is a big state, and Farm Bureau serves as the Voice of Texas Agriculture on air and in everything we do at the county, state and national levels," John Ross said. "This podcast is just another way to do that and provide information about agriculture to anyone who wants to learn more."

Listeners can subscribe to

Texas Ag Today at Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher and TuneIn.

The podcast can also be found on the Texas Farm Bureau website.

The Texas Farm Bureau Radio Network is the state's number one and most listened-to agricultural radio network. The network has eight daily programs and one 15-minute weekend show called Farm Bureau Roundup, the longest-running syndicated farm program in the nation. Farm Bureau Roundup has aired every weekend for the past 65 years.

For a complete list of affiliate stations and more information about the radio network, visit <https://texasfarmbureau.org/radio>.

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**Please Pray for our Communities,
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And Don't Forget to Pray for Rain!